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Welcome from Avril Hall-Callaghan, General Secretary

We welcome you all back to the new school year and, to those of you who have been successful in obtaining a new post, we extend our congratulations and best wishes.

We felt it would be useful to provide you with this quick and easy guide to your Conditions of Service which can be used by any member to answer those questions which arise in the course of the school year. We have included a section for Newly-Qualified Teachers which may also be useful to those who are responsible for mentoring, and information across a wide range of issues including maternity, absence, salary and pensions.

Many issues arise during the course of the school year and we hope that this Guide will address some of the questions you may have. However, we cannot anticipate every problem that you may face so do not hesitate to contact either me, Jacque Reid, Deputy General Secretary or our Field Officers, Lewis Love and Leigh Cooper, on **028 9066 2216** for further help and advice.

We will be happy to assist you.

In the meantime, we at UTU wish you all an enjoyable, productive and problem-free year!

Headquarters Staff



Avril Hall-Callaghan
General Secretary



Jacque Whyte
Deputy General Secretary



Lewis Love
Field Officer



Leigh Cooper
Field Officer



Rebekka Gilpin
Organising Officer

Newly-Qualified Teachers

For several years you have been learning how to teach. The time has now come for you to put into practice all that you have learnt. Could I stress one very important point right from the start -teaching is all about communicating with your pupils. Until you have mastered this art all the educational theories in the world will not help you.

Successful teaching depends very much on building up the right relationship with your classes. How do you achieve this? There is no clean answer to that question, or should I say, there are as many answers as there are children.

Each school is different. Each teacher is different. It is up to you to develop a style of teaching that suits you, your school and the children under your care, and it is not something that happens overnight.

You must be prepared to put in the maximum amount of effort and enthusiasm. You must be prepared to take advice from others more experienced than yourself. You must, above all, be prepared to be flexible and adapt to any situation that arises.

As your skills as a teacher develop so the amount of job satisfaction increases, and then you will realise that all your years of training were indeed worthwhile.

Once qualified you must register with the General Teaching Council (GTC) by logging on to www.gtcni.org.uk and for temporary employment with the Northern Ireland Substitute Teacher Register (NISTR) by either logging on to the website or phoning **028 9056 4000** and requesting an application form, the Registration may take some time as police security checks will be carried out.

For both of the above a Teacher Register Number is required but this will not be issued until your first salary has been received. However it is recommended that both are contacted as soon as you graduate. Guidance on registration should be given by your University/College.

Graduates who have attended a University/College outside Northern Ireland will also have to register with GTCNI even if already registered in England, Scotland or Wales. Sometimes a Teacher Register Number will have been allocated if trained outside Northern Ireland but this may not be used when employed locally.

For teachers on **permanent** contracts salary is paid into bank/building society monthly on the last banking day of the month with special arrangements for the Christmas period.

For teachers in **temporary** employment salary is paid into bank/building society in the middle of the month following employment.

You will receive a pay advice slip giving notification that salary has been lodged.

With your first salary a **National Insurance Number** will be allocated unless you have been in previous employment when this number will remain the same. National Insurance will be deducted from your gross salary.

A **Tax Code (possibly an interim one)** will also be allocated. Income Tax will be deducted from gross salary. Everyone has a tax free personal allowance which is likely to change annually. 2017/2018 allowance is £11,000; the next £32,000 is taxed at 20%; above £32,001 is taxed at 40%. Also deducted from salary will be contributions to Northern Ireland Teachers' Pensions Scheme (superannuation). You may opt out of the scheme but you must provide for payments to be made to an alternative pension. Ulster Teachers' Union does not recommend opting out. Retirement age may seem a long way ahead but in the event of being forced to retire early through ill health it is important that you are in a scheme which will provide a lump sum and regular income.

Getting things into perspective

Everything about your new job will be a bit strange at first, and if you want to make life as easy as possible for yourself you will try to get an overall view of certain aspects of the school as quickly as possible.

1. THE SCHOOL YEAR

The dreaded phrase for most teachers as a new term begins is 'Schemes of Work', These schemes outline what you are planning to teach for the coming year — the amount of detail required varies from school to school but your Head of Department / Principal will keep you right.

It is very difficult for a new teacher to judge the amount and standard of work to plan in the first year. It is possible that your school has pre-existing schemes of work — please check with Head of Dept (HOD) / Principal. Remember that the Principal will want to see these schemes and possibly comment on their content.

All Newly-Qualified Teachers (NQTs) are assigned a mentor; check with him/her to make sure you have an overall view of the school year.

- (a) The dates of the holidays throughout the year — every school has basically the same compulsory holidays, but there are up to 10 extra non-contact days which may vary from school to school.
- (b) The dates of external examinations which may affect your pupils e.g. GCSE etc.
- (c) The dates of internal examinations, when reports are issued and parents' evenings.
- (d) Any other external or internal event which may affect the pupils e.g. Field Trips, School Productions, School Trip etc.

2. THE SCHOOL'S RESOURCES

Before you begin to plan what you teach it is advisable to investigate what resources are available to you.

The main resource in any school will be textbooks, but there will also be PCs, laptops and various pieces of audio-visual equipment.

Many schools have interactive white boards and a growing number are using iPads in the classroom.

3. THE STAFFING STRUCTURE

As a Newly-Qualified Teacher you will probably have thought only as far as actually getting a job. When you arrive in school you will discover that some teachers, in addition to the teaching duties, have responsibility for other duties e.g. curriculum co-ordination, exams, pastoral roles, senior management team etc.

There will be certain teachers who receive teaching allowances for their extra duties — you may enquire from your UTU Representative how many teaching allowances the school has and how they are distributed. It is up to the Principal and the Board of Governors to decide how these are distributed.

It is advisable to try and find out as soon as possible who is actually responsible for various activities within the school, e.g. to whom you send the dinner money, who looks after the school netball team, who is responsible for entering pupils for examinations, who produces the school play.

Once you have established who deals with what, you will know who to contact if a problem arises in that field. You will also know who to approach if you wish to become involved yourself in any of the activities organised in school e.g. hockey training, canoeing etc.

4. GROUNDWORK

If you are appointed before the end of June you should enquire if it would be possible to spend some time as a visitor in school, so that you can get used to your new environment without the added responsibility of being in charge of a class. Time spent in this way is invaluable in your induction into the school and you will find that most Principals are only too glad to accommodate.

If this is not possible, then there are several things that you should endeavour to do:

- (a) Meet your Head of Department / Principal to discuss the textbooks, schemes and resources you will be using.
- (b) Determine the number of children in your class(es) and the age range, ability and special needs of these children.
- (c) Gather some basic information about the school day; e.g. starting time, break time, lunch time, assembly time etc.
- (d) Make yourself aware of the basic layout of the school especially emergency exits and evacuation procedure.
- (e) Find out when the first Staff Meeting of the term is being held — many schools will be having one or more non-contact days ("Baker" days) before term officially commences.
- (f) Most importantly, find out what preparation you need to do before term commences.

5. CONTRACT, INDUCTION & EPD

Your Contract

You will be asked to sign a Contract of Service and undergo a medical examination. You should read the terms of your contract carefully and if in any doubt consult UTU Head Office.

Failure to sign or produce medical reports may lead to a stoppage of your salary without notice, and our experience is that this often leads to serious inconvenience for the teachers concerned. UTU advice is to attend to such matters immediately.

Induction and Early Professional Development

All Newly-Qualified Teachers are required to participate in an induction programme to help them consolidate their skills in the classroom. The programme is provided in partnership with the School Development Service of the Education Authority and CCMS. The induction process is integral to the professional development of beginning teachers within the school context. There are a number of unique aspects of teaching which should be addressed during induction to ensure that you become effective teachers. Addressing these aspects will involve both classroom and school focused in-service provision. The overall aim of induction is to continue to address competences which it is recognized will not be fully developed during initial teacher education.

The Career Entry Profile (CEP) is an important bridge between the initial and induction stages. It offers not only a record of the assessment of the Newly Qualified Teacher's competences, but also an indication of the strengths and development needs of the beginning teacher which should influence continuing professional development during induction and early professional development (EPD).

Effective use of the CEP means that the Newly Qualified Teacher will be able to build a strong and coherent framework for personal and professional development. The CEP is the responsibility of the beginning teacher and its use is intended to promote career development. It will be used in the induction phase in order to identify targets for the induction action plan and hence will need to be seen by the principal and the Board of Governors. Based upon the career-entry profile, an induction action plan will be drawn up jointly by the Newly Qualified Teacher and the teacher-tutor in the school where induction is taking place. It should be reviewed and updated at regular intervals throughout the school year.

6. YOUR FIRST TEACHING APPOINTMENT

The **Board of Governors** is your employer.

The **Principal** is responsible for day-to-day running of the school and should have ensured that appropriate policies and procedures are in place.

Vice Principals, Heads of Departments and Key Stage Leaders will assist the Principal and may be your first port of call if/when a problem occurs.

You are responsible for the well-being, discipline and education of the pupils in the class/es assigned to you and you must be aware of the policies and procedures which should be available for your perusal preferably before you are introduced to the pupils. It is particularly important to be fully aware of Child Protection procedures and policies, the school's Disciplinary Procedure and any systems which are in place to seek permission from/keep parents informed.

If you are appointed before the end of June enquire from the Principal if it is possible to spend some time in the school so that you may become familiar with the environment, teaching and ancillary staff, school lay out and resources. If possible take time to familiarise yourself with policies such as disciplinary.

Taking responsibility for your first class/es can be a daunting prospect and preparing well in advance can make the process easier.

It is always a good idea to know more than the pupils so ensure that you are aware of the meaning of bells (end of classes, fire warning etc); what happens at break/lunch time; where to find school resources;

procedure for collection of money; who is responsible for dealing with pupils who have had an accident or have taken ill; what should happen if an adult (parent or other) requests that a child leaves school early.

What should you know about your first class/es?

- a) It is essential that you make yourself aware of the content of the curriculum for each subject or each class / form.
- b) Seek guidance from an experienced teacher who may be your mentor or year / subject / key stage leader.
- c) Schemes / plans of work may be made available and from these it should be possible to draw up your own plans.
- d) Schools vary in planning requirements. Some may require weekly notes, others monthly / 6 weekly / termly planning and you should follow the requirements in your school. It is likely that your plans will be checked and commented upon by Principal / Key Stage Leader / Mentor.
- e) You may also be required to write follow-up assessments on some or all lessons.

Pupils

- a) As quickly as possible learn the pupils' names.
- b) Pupil profiles/records may be made available to you and from these it is possible to ascertain problems — behavioural / learning / medical / social. Classroom organisation may be based on your knowledge of the children. (You may place a pupil with a hearing difficulty close to your normal workstation.)
- c) Understanding a child's home situation can help in understanding the pupil's difficulties in the school situation. Changing home circumstances may also be one reason for a change in behaviour or performance.

Maintaining discipline in the classroom is the key to happy pupils and a happy teacher. If you are constantly concerned with behavioural problems time for teaching / learning is reduced and you become stressed and gain little job satisfaction. There will always be problems but these can be minimised by your attitude and setting and maintaining standards. Children must know the rules and the sanctions associated with misdemeanours.

It is important that you make yourself aware of the school's Discipline Policy and adhere to that policy. The following gives some guidance on how discipline may be maintained.

Maintaining Discipline in the Classroom

1. Be prepared.

Lessons and adequate resources for each lesson should be prepared well in advance. If you are not totally prepared your attention will not be fully focused on the pupils. The children should never be left idle while you decide what to do next.

2. Be in full control.

You are the responsible adult. The pupils must be aware that they are not deciding on how things are organised or on how the lesson proceeds.

3. Be consistent.

Set the boundaries and avoid allowing these to be extended.

4. Be fair.

Treat all the pupils in the same way.

5. Classroom rules should be kept to a minimum and apply to everyone.

If the rule states that coats are not draped over a chair then the adults must adhere to this.

6. Know what you expect of the pupils.

If you do not know what you expect then the pupils will decide for you.

7. Be punctual.

Arrive in the classroom before the pupils who should enter in an orderly fashion.

8. Settle the pupils before beginning a lesson.

Don't try to talk while pupils are chatting. Avoid raising your voice unduly. A teacher who shouts will be in competition with the pupils. Noise begets more noise.

9. Have a routine.

Set rules as to how the lesson begins and proceeds and on what happens when a bell indicates the lesson's end. Organise orderly exit.

10. Involving pupils in decision making.

Outcomes should be in line with your expectations.

Remember that the pupils are your responsibility and lack of forethought on your part can lead to unpleasant incidents which may have far reaching consequences. You should control the class. The class should not control you. Your first meeting with the pupils is the most important. Your objective should NOT be to make children like you, but to gain their respect.

All Newly-Qualified Teachers

Induction and Early Professional Development (EPD)

Permanent Teachers

As early as possible you should approach the Principal/Year Head and enquire as to who is to be responsible for your induction/EPD. This will be your Teacher Tutor/Mentor. You will be responsible for registering as an NQT with the EA and CCMS. You will also be responsible for ensuring that you follow the correct procedure/s throughout the year.

Career Entry Profile (CEP)

All teacher graduates leave College/University with a CEP which highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the individual as has been evidenced during the teacher training. It is this which will guide you and your mentor as to which areas need to be addressed so that your career may be effectively developed. The CEP which will be seen by the Principal and BOG will be used to identify targets for the induction plan which you and your Teacher Tutor will draw up together. It should be reviewed and updated at regular intervals throughout the year.

In-service Training

During your induction year the School Development Service of the Education Authority will run out-of-school training days on various aspects. You should be released from school on these days to attend.

Not only is the training helpful but the opportunity to meet other NQTs can be invaluable in the early years of your career.

Temporary Teachers

1. Register with the School Development Service of the Education Authority.
2. Attend courses where possible.
3. If in long-term temporary work ask that you be allocated a Teacher Tutor and try to complete aspects of Induction.

The following information applies to all teachers at all stages in their careers

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Working time

- (a) A full-time teacher other than a teacher employed in a residential establishment, shall be available for work on 195 days a year of which not more than 190 days should involve teaching children in a classroom situation.
- (b) A teacher, other than a teacher employed in a residential establishment, shall be available to perform such duties at such times and such places as may be reasonably specified by the principal for 1265 hours per year exclusive of time spent off school premises in preparing and marking lessons and time spent travelling to and from the place of work.
- (c) A teacher may not be required to teach as distinct from supervise children in a classroom situation for more than 25 hours per week in a primary or special school and 23.5 hours per week in a secondary school.
- (d) Unless employed under a separate contract as a mid-day supervisor, a teacher shall not be required to undertake mid-day supervision.
- (e) Subject to paragraph (f) all teachers shall be required to have a break of at least 30 minutes between the hours of 12 noon and 2.00 pm.
- (f) Teachers in nursery schools and in nursery units in primary schools shall be required to have a break of at least 30 minutes between the hours of 12 noon and 2.30 pm.
- (g) A “year” means a period of 12 months commencing on 31st July and a “week” means a period of 7 days commencing on a Sunday.

The following duties shall be deemed to be included in the professional duties which a school teacher may be required to perform:

- (a) Planning and preparing courses and lessons.
- (b) Teaching, according to their educational needs, the pupils assigned to him/her, including the setting and marking of work to be carried out by the pupils in school and elsewhere.
- (c) Assessing recording and reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.
Specific enquiries can be answered by the UTU officials — telephone **028 9066 2216**.

Contracts

When appointed to a post

You will be asked to sign a Contract of Service under which you are bound by the Teachers’ Terms and Conditions of Service. The contract should be read carefully and if you have any doubts please consult UTU. You will also be asked to undergo a medical examination.

On appointment to your first position

The contract will confirm the type of employment: permanent full-time; permanent part-time; temporary etc. and, if part-time, will also confirm the number of hours/days which you are expected to work.

Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools who are in permanent, full-time employment are contracted to work in 39 weeks comprising 38 weeks pupil contact and 1 week exceptional closing. The total number of hours is 1265 which may be allocated as follows.

Secondary Schools: Time Allocation

23½ hours per week is the **maximum** number of hours which may be allocated for class contact i.e. teaching, which means that the way in which hours will be divided in one year is:

(Teachers working part-time will have their hours calculated accordingly. Example: 2.5 days or 50% contract divide hours below by 2; 4 days or 80% contract multiply hours below by 4/5)

Total:	1265 hours
Class contact:	38 weeks x 23½ hrs = 893 hours
Directed time:	<u>372 hours</u>
Exceptional Closures:	5 days x 6 hrs = 30 hours
All other duties	<u>342 hours</u>

Primary Schools: Time Allocation

25 hours per week is the **maximum** number of hours which may be allocated for class contact i.e. teaching, which means that the way in which hours will be divided in one year is:

(Teachers working part-time will have their hours calculated accordingly. Example: 2.5 days or 50% contract divide hours below by 2; 4 days or 80% contract multiply hours below by 4/5.)

Total:	1265 hours
Class contact:	38 weeks x 25 hrs = 950 hours
Directed time:	315 hours
Exceptional Closures:	5 days x 6 hrs = 30 hours
All other duties	<u>285 hours</u>

All other duties include Teaching Allowances which are not over and above 1265 hours.

(This does not apply to Principal or Vice-Principal).

Other duties for all school types include:

1. Supervisory — pre-school, break, after school seeing pupils off the premises.
Not all teachers will be required to supervise every day but everyone is available to be called on if necessary. The morning break period must be counted as directed time. There may also be occasions when a teacher is called upon to supervise a class if a colleague is called away.

Should a teacher be required to supervise pupils' lunch that teacher must have a minimum 30 minute break allocated (before or after) between 12 noon and 2pm or in Special Schools between 12 noon and 2.30pm.

2. Staff Meetings.
3. Curricular Meetings.
4. Planning and Preparation.
5. Key Stage discussions.
6. Parent Interviews.
7. Extra-curricular activities.
8. Concerts.
9. Assessment and Reporting.
10. Contingency reserve for unforeseen events.
11. Time to carry out management responsibilities.
12. Any other activity which a teacher is required by the Principal to perform in the school year.

Teachers generally work over and above 1265 hours but no one can be directed to work beyond these hours.

A copy of the time budget showing the allocation of a teacher's hours can be obtained from the Principal. When speaking to the Principal about the allocation of hours a teacher should have some idea as to the specific work which he/she may be doing since not every teacher carries out the same tasks. There are activities for which the Principal may be only able to allocate a reasonable amount of time since not everyone works at the same pace e.g. report writing, planning and preparation.

It is not possible to anticipate every activity which may be included but if in doubt contact a UTU Field Officer on 028 9066 2216.

Any changes to a time budget during the year should be by negotiation.

Salary, National Insurance and Superannuation

Your Salary

Salaries are paid monthly on the last day of each month to permanently employed teachers, and half-way through the month following employment in a temporary capacity. Arrangements should be made to have salary paid directly to your bank account. You will receive notification of the amount which has been paid and what deductions have been made for superannuation, National Insurance, PAYE and Union subscription.

National Insurance

To ensure that you qualify for full benefits and pension you must pay a specified number of Class III contributions. National Insurance contributions are deducted monthly from your salary.

Income Tax

Taxation of your salary is done entirely through the PAYE Scheme, and this is operated by the tax office serving the area in which your school lies. It is that office you should approach if you have any questions about your personal tax coding and dependants' allowances. The tax year runs from April to April.

You will be sent a claim form by your local tax office on which you can set out details of certain items which qualify for a tax allowance. This allowance is normally available for UTU Subscription and replacement of items of clothing which are essential for your job. Full details are available from UTU Headquarters.

Superannuation

Teachers are 'contracted-out' of the state pension scheme because their employers provide an acceptable alternative scheme. Each month you pay a percentage of your gross salary to this superannuation scheme, the employer makes a contribution on your behalf and these contributions provide you with a substantial lump sum and pension when you retire. The scheme is no longer compulsory for those in teaching employment, but you must provide an alternative pension in the unlikely event that you opt out of the Teachers' Scheme.

Articles on superannuation appear from time to time in UTU News, and full details of pension entitlement, etc. are published frequently and can be found on the UTU website.

It is worth noting that, unless you pay your superannuation contributions, you will be at risk of a reduced pension when you retire. If you have any queries about salary, NI, IT or superannuation, contact UTU in the first instance.

Salary

All newly-qualified teachers are placed on point 1 of the Main Scale regardless of qualification or age.

Salary: Permanent Teachers

At 2017/2018 the value of Point 1 is £22,022 and a permanent, full-time teacher will be paid over 12 months i.e. Monthly Gross £1,835 (Various deductions apply).

A teacher on part-time contract will be paid accordingly. ie 50% contract: salary £11,011; monthly gross £917.58

Salary: Temporary Teachers

A temporary teacher is paid on the same point as permanent staff but salary may be calculated by the day or hour.

Example:

Main Pay Scale Point 1 — Salary £22,022 (this normally increases in September)

Daily Rate: $\frac{£22,022}{195} = £112.93$

Hourly Rate: $\frac{£22,022}{1265} = £17.40$

Progression on the pay scale

Permanent Teachers

Salaries currently increase on 1st September in each year and movement to the next pay point where appropriate is also on that date. In exceptional circumstances progression may be withheld. Currently until Upper Pay Scale 1 is reached this progression is yearly. Thereafter progression takes 2 years from UPS1 to UPS2 and UPS2 to UPS3. It should be noted that teachers are required to fill in a Threshold application form to progress from M6 to UPS1. Details will be available from your Principal.

Temporary Teachers

Providing a teacher has (1) worked in at least 26 weeks of a school year and (2) has successfully completed EPD or PRSD there should be a yearly movement to the next point on the Main Pay Scale on 1st September. Progression following moving on to UPS1 is a 2 yearly process as it is for Permanent teachers.

Currently all progression is linked to successful completion of EPD (Early Professional Development) or PRSD (Professional Review and Staff Development).

Teaching Allowances

It is currently possible for teachers to improve salary by taking on extra responsibilities known as Teaching Allowances.

These may become available in the school when a teacher relinquishes his/her allowance through age retirement, phased retirement or internal or external promotion.

There are currently 5 points on the scale and when available would be advertised in the school. The advert would inform of responsibilities attached to the point and the criteria used by BOG.

Special Needs Allowances

There are two Special Needs Allowances available and not only could these be awarded to teachers in Special Schools but may also be available to a teacher taking on responsibility for Special Needs pupils in main stream schools.

Northern Ireland Teachers' Pensions Scheme

The NITPS is a statutory scheme subject to the Teachers' Superannuation Regulations (NI) 1988 (as amended). Full details available from Teachers' Pensions' Branch. **(028) 7131 9000**

The scheme is contributory; both teachers and employers contribute a percentage. The minimum service requirement for the award of pension is two years. It is possible to purchase Additional Pension.

It is a 'final salary' scheme providing a lump sum on retirement and regular income after retirement. Pension is index-linked.

For scheme members who began making contributions

(a) prior to 1/4/2007 benefits are calculated:

$$\text{Pension} = \frac{\text{service} \times \text{average salary}}{80} \quad \text{Lump Sum} = \text{pension} \times 3$$

(b) after 1/4/2007 benefits are calculated:

$$\text{Pension} = \frac{\text{service} \times \text{average salary}}{60}$$

It is possible to "commute" part of the pension to receive a lump sum up to 25% of the fund value.

Benefits will also be payable on one of two levels if retired on Grounds of Ill Health.

- (a) Total Incapacity Benefits (TIB) with service being enhanced by half of service which could have been completed before NPA or
 - (b) Partial Incapacity Benefits (PIB) with no enhancements.
- Benefits are also payable to dependants on a member's death in service.

Normal Pension Age (NPA) for those in the scheme prior to 1 April, 2007 is 60 and 65 for entrants after that date.

From 1/4/2007 it is possible to **retire** from age 55 but pension/lump sum would be actuarially reduced. A '**Phased Retirement**' is also possible from age 55 when a member reduces employment by a minimum of 25% and maximum of 75% for at least 12 months prior to NPA. Part of pension will be drawn and subsequently re-valued at NPA.

If you have pension queries or are considering retiring, please contact Ulster Teachers' Union.

Pensions arrangements pre-2012 remain the same; anything after this the following applies...

CHANGES FROM 1 APRIL 2015 TO CONTRIBUTION RATES FOR MEMBERS OF THE NI TEACHERS' PENSION SCHEME (NITPS)

This circular sets out changes to member contribution rates from 1 April 2015:

- On 1 April 2015, the salary bands applicable to member contributions for the NITPS changed; and
- The method of determining which salary band a member falls into changed, the appropriate contribution rates to be applied are based on a members' annual salary rate (actual earnings) as opposed to their full-time equivalent (FFE) salary;

These arrangements apply to all members i.e. both those who remain in final salary arrangements and those who move on 1 April 2015 to career average arrangements;

Member tiered contribution rates for the NITPS from 1 April 2015 are shown below:

Actual Annual Pensionable Earnings	Member Contribution Rate
Up to £25,999.99	7.4%
£26,000 to £34,999.99	8.6%
£35,000 to £41,499.99	9.6%
£41,500 to £54,999.99	10.2%
£55,000 to £74,999.99	11.3%
£75,000 and above	11.7%

Further guidance on how to determine which band a member falls into is available on the DENI website — Employer Payroll Guide... <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/topics/teaching-staff/pension-scheme>

Northern Ireland Teachers' Pensions Scheme – from 1 April 2015

From 1 April 2015 the NITPS changed from a final salary scheme to a Career Average Revalued Earnings (CARE) Scheme, and the way your pension benefits are calculated may change.

Some members will not be affected by the changes and will remain in final salary arrangements. Others will start to have their benefits calculated using a combination of career average and final salary arrangements. A new entrant who joins the NITPS on or after the 1 April 2015 will have their benefits calculated using career average arrangements only.

Visit www.deni.gov.uk for further information.

ABSENCES

Sick Leave

Permanent Employment.

There will be times when you may be unable to attend work either for short or longer periods. In all cases the school should be informed as soon as possible.

Currently the "sick leave" year is from 1 April to 31 March and each working day's absence is totalled during that time. The number of full pay/half pay days allowed within that year depends on length of service and type of contract.

(Teachers employed in a temporary capacity, paid daily or hourly rates, have NO right to paid sick leave.)

- (a) During first year of service .
Salary at full rate for 25 working days. After completion of 4 months' full-time service you are also entitled to half rate for 50 working days.

- (b) During 2nd year of service.
Salary at full rate for 50 working days + half rate for 50 working days.
- (c) During 3rd year of service.
Salary at full rate for 75 working days + half rate for 75 working days.
- (d) During 4th year and thereafter.
Salary at full rate for 100 working days + half rate for 100 working days.

Certification

For absences of up to 7 days inclusive (and counting Saturday and Sunday) a self-certification form should be submitted to the Principal as soon as possible and not later than the 7th day of absence, to ensure payment of sick pay.

Short periods of illness may be followed by an informal return to work discussion with your Principal.

For illnesses lasting longer than 7 calendar days a doctor's statement must be submitted to the Principal before the end of the 2nd week of absence.

Following longer absences your GP should issue a Fitness to Return to Work certificate.

If you are absent from employment due to illness:

- (a) for a prolonged period or
- (b) where the frequency of absence gives cause for concern it is possible that:
 - i. you may be requested to attend a formal attendance meeting or
 - ii. the BoG or the Employing Authority may refer you to the Occupational Health Physician for a medical examination.

Phased Return / Alternative Work

If, following a referral to the Occupational Health Physician, you are deemed unfit to maintain a regular and reliable attendance at work the following may be possible:

1. You may be offered a phased return to work of no longer than 4 weeks' duration to ascertain if you are fit to return to your original job.
2. You may be offered a different work pattern such as job share.
3. You may be offered Alternative Work if such is available.
4. You may be offered additional help.

If you are deemed unfit to work your contract may be ended and you may be offered Retirement on Grounds of Ill Health (after 2 years' pensionable service) on one of two levels:

1. Total Incapacity Benefit (TIB) with service being enhanced by half of service which could have been completed before normal pension age (NPA) or
2. Partial Incapacity Benefit (PIB) with no enhancements.

Maternity Leave

All teachers are entitled to one years' maternity leave consisting of 26 weeks ordinary and 26 weeks additional leave.

Your entitlement to occupational pay and/or Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) depends on your work pattern prior to leave beginning.

For those who are entitled Occupational Maternity Pay is currently as follows:

- (a) 4 weeks' full pay
- (b) 2 weeks' 90% of a week's pay
- (c) 12 weeks' half pay + SMP
- (d) 21 weeks' SMP only

You are *not* required to take the entire entitlement but:

- (1) you may not work for the 2 weeks following birth
- (2) you must supply a Fitness to Return to Work certificate from your GP should you wish to return before the end of 26 weeks.

Process

Leave may not begin more than 11 weeks prior to expected date of birth.

By the end of the 15th week prior to expected date your employer should be informed and Forms TR160 (available from Teachers' Salaries Branch) and Form MAT B1 (issued by your GP) should be submitted to your employer.

Full details and advice may be obtained by contacting Ulster Teachers' Union.

Adoption Leave / Pay

Leave may be up to 39 weeks and for those entitled paid as follows:

- 1. 4 weeks' full pay.
- 2. 2 weeks' 90%
- 3. 6 weeks' half pay + Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP)
- 4. 27 weeks' SAP.

Please contact Ulster Teachers' Union for full details and advice if considering taking time off when an adoption is imminent.

Leave other than due to illness or Maternity / Paternity.

Permanent, full time teachers are under contract to be available for work on 195 days in a school year. Any leave is granted at the discretion of the Board of Governors (BOG) and any request should be submitted in writing to the BOG through the Principal.

The Department has issued guidance to BOGs as to which requests might be granted. Some leave may be granted with pay and others without. A teacher is not at liberty to take leave of absence either paid or unpaid without the written permission of the BOG.

The Department's guidance is printed overleaf.

Department of Education Recommendations to Boards of Governors.

Teachers' Leave of Absence not exceeding 3 days.

- (a) All requests for leave of absence, paid or unpaid, should be put in writing to the Board of Governors.
- (b) All leave is granted at the discretion of the Board of Governors.

NOTES:

- 1. The term '**near relative**' means father, mother, husband, wife, brother, sister, son or daughter, grandparents, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law and daughter-in-law.
- 2. The term '**other relative**' means sister-in-law, brother-in-law, nephew, niece, aunt, uncle, or guardian.

CAUSE OF ABSENCE	RECOMMENDED ACTION
1. Death of a near relative or other relative being a member of the teacher's household.	"Up to 3 days' leave with pay
2. Death of other relative	1 day's leave with pay but, where extensive travel is involved, 2 days may be granted.
3. Attendance at funeral other than a relative.	Leave with pay only where attendance is a necessary social duty. The period of absence should be the minimum part of the day necessary to fulfil the duty.
4. Marriage of a teacher.	3 days' special leave with pay if marriage takes place (a) outside a period of closing other than the long vacation. (b) within a period of closing other the long vacation.
5. Attendance at a wedding.	1 day's leave with pay if the bride or groom is a near relative or other relative or if the teacher is a bridesmaid or best man but, where extensive travel is involved, up to 2 days may be granted.
6. Serious illness of member of teacher's household	Up to 3 days' leave with pay.
7. Attendance at examinations.	Leave with pay for each day on which an examination is attended provided the exam is designed to lead to additional qualifications.
8. Attendance at interviews in connection with other teaching appointments or other appointments within the NI education service.	Up to 1 day's leave with pay.
9. Attendance as representative at Teachers' Organisations.	Leave with pay provided frequency of absence is not excessive.
10. Attendance at Conference of Teachers' Organisations.	Leave with pay.

CAUSE OF ABSENCE	RECOMMENDED ACTION
11. Attendance at Conferences, Meetings etc.	Leave with pay for; attendance at meetings of ELBs, CCMS, committees of such bodies; attendance at meetings of statutory bodies or bodies set up by Dept of Ed. of which the teacher is a member or other meetings arranged by Dept of Ed.; attendance at a conference where such attendance is likely to be beneficial to the teacher in the discharge of his/her school duties; or attendance at youth welfare activities e.g. Guides, Community Relations Projects etc.
12. Absence due to disruption of daily travel facilities e.g. flood, snow, transport strike	Leave with pay but regard must be given to the individual circumstances.
13. Attendance at Ordination or Profession.	1 day's leave with pay, but, where extensive travel is involved, 2 days may be granted.
14. Attendance at Court, Industrial or other statutory Tribunal as a witness, plaintiff or defendant.	Leave with pay.
15. Attendance at Graduation Ceremony involving teacher or near relative.	1 day's leave with pay, but, where extensive travel is involved 2 days may be granted.
16. Participating in, or officiating at, sporting events of international, national or provincial standing as an amateur.	Leave with pay.
17. In the event of a partner's confinement.	3 days' leave with pay.
18. Serious burglary or serious damage to house.	1 day's leave with pay.
19. Lay person on bench of juvenile court.	Time off with pay less any loss of earnings' allowance received by teacher for his/her service on not more than 4 days in the school year.
20. Visit to or accompanying spouse on special visit to a medical consultant or one parent accompanying own child on a special visit to a medical consultant.	Up to 1 day's leave with pay.
21. Accompanying own child to receive Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award.	Up to 2 day's leave with pay depending on travel arrangements.

NATURE OF ABSENCE	RECOMMENDED ACTION
22. Attending own child's graduation ceremony outside NI.	Up to 2 days' leave with pay depending on travel arrangements.
23 House removal.	1 day's leave with pay.
24. Birthday, New Year or Special Honours Award to a near relative.	1 day's leave with pay but where extensive travel is involved 2 days may be granted.
25. Preparation for examination.	Leave without pay.
26. Attendance at musical festival, feis etc. as a competitor.	Leave without pay unless a festival is of national or international standing.
27. Acting as presiding officer, polling clerk etc. at an election.	Leave without pay if school is in operation.
28. Attendance at religious observances when this is required by the regulations of the teacher's religious denomination.	Leave without pay provided the teacher gives notice to his/her employing authority at the beginning of the school year of the days required.

Leave of Absence exceeding 3 working days.

NATURE OF ABSENCE	RECOMMENDED ACTION
1 a. Participating in or officiating (manager, coach referee etc.) at sporting events of international, national or provincial standing as an amateur. b. Participating in sporting events as a member of a club.	Leave with pay. Leave without pay.
2. Attending RIR, TA annual camps or taking part in Royal Naval Reserve exercises.	Leave with pay for up to 10 working days.
3. Training as a dog handler with NI Mountain Rescue.	Leave with pay not exceeding 5 working days.
4. Staying with child receiving specialist treatment in distant hospital or caring for ill or dependant relative for a considerable period of time.	Leave without pay.

NATURE OF ABSENCE	RECOMMENDED ACTION
5. Attending conferences or functions in capacity as District Councillor.	Leave with pay (if the teacher concerned holds Chief Elective Office i.e. Mayor or Chair or if the Absence is connected with educational or recreational activities).
6. Attending unapproved courses or undertaking a course of study not grant-aided by the Dept.	Leave without pay.
7. Competing in International music festival in	Leave without pay. foreign country.
8. Attending conferences or events (national or international)in connection with charitable organisations e.g. Rotary, Soroptimist's Clubs etc.	Leave without pay.
9. Performing voluntary service overseas, visiting disaster areas working in under-privileged countries.	Leave without pay.
10. Standing as a candidate for parliamentary elections or acting as election agent or electioneering for such.	Leave without pay.
11. Performing duties as National President of Teachers' Organisation.	Leave with pay as and when agreed during presidential year.
12. Award of scholarship to visit areas outside UK re: Educational standards.	Leave without pay for Principal and Senior Staff only.
13. Award of a Teacher Fellowship.	Leave with pay for up to one term if teaching in secondary school and Fellowship is connected with subject taught.

Childcare Vouchers

1. Information available from *Employers for Childcare* phone **0800 028 3008**
2. Application forms available from the Education Authority.
3. Scheme open to all working parents and available for each parent.
4. Not means-tested.
5. A different scheme from tax credits. (Check with *Employers for Childcare*)
6. Maximum £243 per month which is exempt from income tax and national insurance.
7. Must be payable to a Registered Childminder, day nurseries, crèches, playgroups, after school and breakfast clubs, holiday schemes and work place nurseries.
8. Opt-out possible.
 - a) May affect Maternity Pay so opt out recommended 23 weeks prior to DOB of child.
 - b) May affect sick leave pay.
9. Does not affect:
 - a) Teachers' Pensions
 - b) State Pension
 - c) AVCs

Part-Time Working Arrangements

1. A variety of part-time working arrangements are in place. Applications must be made to the BoG to be considered and if a request is not granted there is a possibility of appeal.
 - a) **Temporary Variation of Contract**
Where a teacher requires a short-term, temporary change in his/her working pattern, an application may be made to the BoG for a Temporary Variation of Contract. The temporary variation would normally be short-term, but may be for a period of up to one year, with possible extension in extenuating circumstances.
 - b) **Flexible Working**
A teacher with a child under 18, or those with responsibilities as carers, may apply here. Flexible working arrangements can be permanent, or temporary for a maximum of three years.
 - c) **Job Share**
Two or more teachers sharing one post is known as job share. Job share arrangements can be permanent, or temporary for a maximum of two years.
 - d) **Career Break**
A Career Break is a period of special leave of absence without salary for a period of not less than one year and not more than five years.
2. **Phased Retirement**
This is available only to those who are aged 55 or over. It is possible to reduce the time worked and/or teaching responsibilities in exchange for a reduced pension/lump sum while still earning salary.

Administering Medicines

1. There is no obligation on teachers to administer medicines/drugs to pupils.
2. Teachers should be wary of involvement in the administration of medicines, including drugs to pupils.
3. Where teachers do agree to administer medication / drugs they should only do so after:
 - a) reassuring themselves that they have received adequate training to perform each of the tasks they are being asked to undertake.
 - b) they have clear and written guidance from their employer.
 - c) they have clear and written indemnification from their employer.
 - d) they are afforded the proper facilities to administer the medication/drugs and to store the same.
 - e) they are accompanied by a responsible member of staff on each occasion they have direct contact with a pupil to administer medication / drugs.
 - f) they have immediate access to a fully qualified practitioner should they decide they need to consult.
 - g) they have been given a copy of a letter where the parents of the pupil have been informed the teacher has no contractual obligation to administer any medication.
 - h) they have been given a typed copy of the full information provided by the parent/s in writing about the medication, when it is to be administered, dosage and any possible effects on the pupil.
 - i) they have the written assurance of their employer that they will not be called upon to make any judgement about when, how often or what dosage to give.
 - j) they have, in writing, the name of the teacher in the school who is responsible for the school's record of administration of medication and drugs for the safekeeping of the substances and who will be able to provide the teacher with either the substances to administer and the means to administer them or the keys to provide access to the secure place where they are kept.
 - k) they are satisfied the volume of such work in the school being done by themselves and their colleagues does not warrant the employment of a qualified full-time or part-time nurse to carry out this function.
 - l) they are satisfied that they are not being asked to perform a task which would require the attention of a qualified nurse or other medical practitioner or which would result in an injury to a pupil.
 - m) they are given a copy of a statement where the parent has given permission for them to administer the medication/drugs concerned.

Having satisfied yourself as to the above follow your Employing Authority's Guidelines on Administration of Medicines and Drugs.

Educational Visits

Day Trips, Overnight Stays and Sports Events

(Any activity or event which is not taking place on your school premises)

What is your responsibility when taking pupils out of the immediate environs of the school?

The responsibility of a teacher, either leader or assistant, is deemed to be that which would be exercised by a responsible adult. This is known as acting "in loco parentis".

If a child has an accident whilst under your supervision you must be able to prove that you took all the care which the law would expect of a child's parent / guardian. You may face a charge of negligence if you fail to take such care.

No teacher should feel under pressure to undertake such visits but if you wish to either lead or help to staff such a visit the following guidance may be helpful.

- a) Carry out a risk assessment.
Where possible visit the site of the proposed visit/event and ascertain problems which may present themselves for pupils:
 - (1) of the proposed age group
 - (2) of normal ability
 - (3) who display physical / health or other difficulties.
These problems may include:
 - (i) travel arrangements
 - (ii) physical outdoor / indoor activities;
 - (iii) eating/sleeping arrangements.

- b) Having carried out such an assessment it is your duty to:
 - (i) put in place procedures to minimise the risks.
 - (ii) inform parents of specific problems which may affect all pupils or individual children.

Example:

Would a particular activity be deemed too strenuous for any or all of the pupils and if so can it be replaced for an individual pupil or for all pupils? Could a choice of activities be offered and if so is the staffing adequate to facilitate such an arrangement?

Specific areas which require particular attention.

1. Travel

- a) Do the pupils require travel documents? Passports / E111 / Photographic identification
- b) Are inoculations required?
- c) Does any pupil suffer from travel sickness?
- d) Are there specific dietary requirements which need to be arranged prior to travel?
The above can be a particular problem if there are intermediate stops at motorway service stations.
- e) Is medication required for any pupil/s during travel?
- f) Is Coach/Mini-bus company reliable and does it operate properly maintained vehicles?

2. Sleeping arrangements

- a) Is staff accommodation adjacent to pupils' dorms?
- b) Does any pupil have a problem which would disturb others during the night?
- c) Is there a separate sick bay?
If a child is ill enough to prevent participation in events how is that pupil supervised without leaving other groups understaffed?
- d) Are male and female staff allocated to respective dorms?
- e) Can pupils who cause problems in the dorms be separated and supervised?

3. Dietary considerations

- a) Parents should indicate if pupils require specific diets for health reasons or as a part of religious observance.
- b) Hotel / Travel Company should be informed of any requirements before travel.
- c) Is there a specific course of action which should be taken if a pupil becomes ill through eating the wrong food? (*Nut allergy can be a major problem*)

4. Activities

How are the various activities to be staffed?

- a) Is trained staff always available at resort / centre to guide/lead activities?
- b)
 - In the event of an accident what procedures are in place?
 - Is there a local doctor on call and do you have the clinic's contact number?
 - Do you have adequate knowledge regarding each child's specific health history such as allergic reactions to medicines/treatments?
 - If abroad will there be language difficulties?
 - What transport is available to hospital?
 - Who travels with pupil to doctor/hospital and is the staffing level sufficient to allow one or two staff to leave the event location?
 - How are the pupil's parents informed?
 - Is there 24-hour contact with your school to deal with any unforeseen circumstances?
- c)
 - Is the difficulty of the event within the pupils' capabilities?
 - Is the walk too long?
 - Is a climb too difficult?
 - Will the pupils be suitably clothed? (Correct clothing may be provided at location).
 - Are you confident to lead or accompany pupils taking part in all of the activities?
 - Have you a trained first aider accompanying the party?

5. Discipline.

Pupils must be made aware of the behaviour which is expected during any visit. They must also be aware of the sanctions which are available if rules are broken.

The outcome of a recent case taken by parents of pupils on a skiing trip hinged on (a) the pupils having been given clear rules prior to the visit and (b) the response of the leader when pupils broke rules. It was stated that when pupils were caught smoking, which had been forbidden, it should have made the leader aware of the possibility of breaking other rules such as skiing off-piste.

When rules are broken the leader must take appropriate steps to ensure that further rule breaking is minimised. It is not sufficient to give a second chance because if a pupil feels that there is no consequence to his/her actions it is likely that the boundaries will be pushed further.

Allowing pupils to go out when not accompanied by a teacher is a risk which requires serious consideration. The age of the pupils, location and knowledge regarding their general response to freedom and adherence to rules should be taken into account. This is important whether they are shopping within the confines of a large London store or skiing in France. You are the responsible adult whether the pupils are within your range of vision or out of sight.

6. Insurance.

Being **properly insured for Travel** (short or extended journeys), sporting and other activities, regardless of location and degree of difficulty, is your **No.1 Concern**.

Never leave your school without being satisfied that you and your pupils are covered by Insurance for whatever may happen whilst travelling or taking part in activities.

Using your own car

Ulster Teachers' Union does *not* recommend that private vehicles be used to transport pupils either for short or long journeys but if you agree to using yours you should follow this guidance.

- a) Never be the only adult in the vehicle. (Child Protection)
- b) Provide (1) seat belts and (2) booster seats for pupils up to 135cm tall and up to 12 years of age. (Legal Requirement)
- c) Check with your Insurance Company that you are properly insured for transporting pupils.
- d) Ask for written consent from (1) the BOG and (2) parents giving permission for pupils to be carried in your private vehicle.
- e) Correctly maintain your vehicle so that, in the event of an accident, you are not deemed to have contributed to its happening through negligence.

Using parents' / classroom assistants' / non-teaching staff's cars

This should *only* ever be done with the written consent of the Principal who should ensure that the individual has security clearance, is properly insured, provides correct booster seats and will not be the only adult in the vehicle.

All the above advice applies whether the pupils are going out of school for an hour's sporting event or a 10 day visit to France.

UTU membership

YOUR UNION

You can become a Full Member of the UTU by sending back the deduction authorisation form.

Know your UTU School Rep who will be your first point of contact with the UTU in school and, if you can, try to attend Branch meetings in your area.

Don't hesitate to contact Headquarters with any queries you may have and encourage those of your friends who have not yet made up their mind about a Union to join UTU.